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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

PRESSURE ON THE DOLLAR

THAT THE United States should at this season be losing so much ground in the matter of international payments is somewhat difficult to understand. For months our trade balance itself has been improving; it gives promise of rising to a record six and a half billion dollars in 1961. There has been no sharp rise in American foreign aid, either for military or economic purposes. Men in the armed services overseas have not greatly increased in numbers. During the early months of this year the drain on American gold appeared to be tapering off as our Allies curtailed their discrimination against our goods and we reduced our foreign imports. At the same time these Allies began to assume responsibility for a greater share of the aid to underdeveloped lands.

But something happened. In the quarter ending September 30 the adverse balance of payments soared to a four and a third billions annual rate, while the actual loss of gold in that quarter rose to $637,000,000. United States gold reserves are expected at any moment now to dip below eighteen billion dollars for the first time in two decades. Primarily responsible is a shift in investment capital.

What brought this about? One factor, which shows the interdependence of the various components and the sensitivity of the international mechanism, was a step the Administration took to stimulate declining domestic business activity. It was the reduction of Federal interest rates. This in turn led capital to seek short-term investments at Western Europe's higher interest rates. That is one reason for the flight of capital from our shores.

Another is even more fundamental—particularly for longer-term investments. As fears of an imminent recession here grew and America's business stagnation was contrasted with boom conditions in Europe, there was a marked transfer of capital across the Atlantic. A marked lack of confidence has been operating as a determining factor. With a resurgence of the national economy, confidence in the dollar would revive and investment capital return—and the threat to our gold reserves would be averted.

IT IS HIGHLY characteristic of the Eisenhower Administration that its first big step to meet the situation is retrenchment. It must be said that this plan to cut overseas expenditures is developed with an eye to broader concerns. The dependents of servicemen who are to be brought home are to be returned from prosperous countries with economies not heavily dependent upon the purchases of the American families stationed there. Moreover, the Administration is determined that concern over the gold reserve shall not lead to cutting back aid to the underdeveloped countries.

Economizing in this way on foreign shores is expected to effect a billion-dollar improvement in our payments balance over the next eighteen months. But there will be adverse foreign reactions to the linking, once again, of economic aid to the purchases of American products. Locally the new restrictions against purchases by the P.X. of non-American goods will hardly be popular. Economies of this sort may well alienate people who have been trying to help us with our dollar problem.

These rigid economies overseas also threaten to have effects other than economic. The cutback decreed in American envoys' travel can by its very stringency impair the effectiveness of our diplomats. Repercussions on the armed services will be wider still. When long-term overseas service means a break with family ties, morale often tends to be lowered and the numbers serving on a voluntary basis sharply reduced. Those who argue that the

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latest weapons mean fewer soldiers overseas appear to forget that conventional weapons still supply an answer that involves neither surrender nor a thermonuclear holocaust. In short, the new economies can lead to new difficulties.

If, however, in a less drastic form retrenchment overseas could be combined with a domestic economic resurgence under the new Kennedy Administration, the situation can be saved. No nation can be expected to carry an undue foreign burden indefinitely. Secretary Anderson and Under-Secretary Dillon will deserve well of their country if they prevail upon West Germany, with its two billions payments surplus, actually to take on its share of foreign aid, if not occupation costs. Further assistance from France and Britain will also help. But, as the *Wall Street Journal* says in this connection: "The first consideration is the condition of business here. If business isn't good the Federal budget will fall into the red, aggravating fears for the safety of the dollar." We might add that there is reason for such fears as long as America's vast unmet social needs coincide with such factors as a steel industry operating at half-capacity and more than five million workers unemployed.

RACIST MARDI GRAS

PRESS REPORTS say that residents of New Orleans are worried about the effect the school riots there may have on the city's national prestige and its tourist-attracting "happy image." To those whose fortunes are not directly involved, this approach must seem, necessarily, a minor part of the civic crisis attending desegregation of the schools in New Orleans. And yet, if the rest of the world must now think of New Orleans as a town where the sight of four six-year-old Negro girls in a once all-white school can provoke the most primitive violence and contempt for the law, its residents are quite right to be concerned for their city's good name.

The truth of the matter, we think, is that the trouble New Orleans now suffers comes from a relatively small number of its citizens—many of them recent arrivals from the segregationist rural areas. This is not to say, of course, that the people of New Orleans are for integration in the public schools—they are not. But, as we think the voting in a recent school board election demonstrates, they are for keeping the public schools open even in the face of token integration—and in the South in 1960 this course must be considered moderation.

Politically, the dilemma New Orleans faces is rapidly becoming a classic pattern. The voters of New Orleans are, in Southern terms, "moderate," opposing integration but unwilling to destroy the public school system, and the school board reflects this sentiment. At the same time, however, the school board is caught between the Constitution, represented by the federal courts, on the one side, and the state government, reflecting primarily the segregationist views of a rural populace, on the other. Thus in the current crisis the legislature has served as a privileged sanctuary from which the segregationists have been able to stir up trouble, cutting off funds from the city's schools and by violent speeches exciting racist sentiment within the city itself.

Under these circumstances, the voices of reason inside New Orleans have obviously had a very difficult time in being heard. As this editorial is written, a holiday week is bringing a measure of troubled peace to the beleaguered city, while both sides jockey for a better legal position. But the future is dark and the prospects uncertain.

If statements by public officials are called for in this situation, which is a matter of grave concern to the nation and the world as well as to New Orleans itself, we would like to hear the voice, not of the President-elect, as some suggest, but of the President himself, newly returned from a work-play visit to Georgia. Mr. Eisenhower has always pointedly refrained from expressing his own position on school desegregation, beyond noting that the Supreme Court decision represents the law of the land which he is charged to enforce, whether he agrees or disagrees. No one would deny that Presi-

NEXT WEEK

SEYMOUR CAIN, writing in the Christmas Book Issue, discusses Gabriel Marcel.

"Marcel calls on the reader to participate with him in an intuitive groping for meaning, to respond to the many evocations the phenomenon calls forth, so that he may gain insight into the meanings intended by our elemental speech. This is not a matter of following an argument, of assenting or dissenting to certain statements, of logical analysis and understanding. The 'understanding' Marcel calls for is more like the appreciation and insight called for in our encounter with art, history, religion, and other persons."

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dent Eisenhower is entitled to his own reservations on the wisdom of this or that action at this or that time, but it seems to us the matter has gone far beyond such distinctions now. Desegregation of the schools *is* the law of the land, and it is time for a President who has always preferred to appeal not to law but to "the minds and hearts of men" to make such an appeal on behalf of the Negro citizens of the United States. As Mr. Eisenhower has always emphasized, he is the President of all the people, and this includes the four little Negro girls trying to attend the first grade in the New Orleans public schools.

RELIGION—AND OTHER THINGS

IT MUST BY now be clear to all Americans that religion and politics are not related in any simple fashion. At least one would like to think that the general level of sophistication has been advanced. But one is deterred from ready optimistic conclusions by the apparently insuparable obstacles many people encounter when they consider religion in relation to their own specializations. Consider, for example, many of the critics of stage and screen. More than once we have expressed surprise, and regret, at the simple lack of comprehension that is revealed when a serious view of religion becomes material for a play or movie. In recent years such works as "Diary of a Country Priest," "The Living Room" and "The Power and the Glory" have provoked eruptions of irrationality in many a column that was ostensibly artistic criticism.

If Bosley Crowther's reaction is a fair indication, Ingmar Bergman's "The Virgin Spring" will introduce consternation and puzzlement into these same critical circles. The movie, based on a thirteenth-century legend, tells of a maiden who is raped by goatherds, of the violent revenge her father takes upon them and, finally, of his subsequent remorse and repentance. So far so good. With reservations about the representation of the extreme brutality, Mr. Crowther praises the simplicity and strength of the movie: "it might be termed a morality play, so direct and uncomplicated is it."

But there is a real flaw. "We rather feel Mr. Bergman has been giving us nothing more than a literal, very harsh, very vivid and occasionally touching statement of a moral. When water springs from the earth beneath the dead child, after the father had repented his wrong, the simple—almost naive—conception is resolved in a miracle. This is a simplification we feel Mr. Bergman is above."

There is an odd bit of logic in the reasoning here. The statements run like this: the movie presents only a literal, moving statement of a moral; the miracle is a simple, almost naive, resolution of the moral; Mr. Bergman should be above such simplicities.

The odd bit of logic is that the miracle, in terms of the picture, would scarcely seem to be naive, and only in a highly specialized sense could it be termed simple. It would seem, on the contrary, to be one of the real complicating aspects of the picture. There is, of course, the very real possibility that Mr. Crowther simply rejects the possibility of miracles and does not wish to see them imported into movies that are harsh, vivid and, most particularly, literal. One could build a respectable case on such grounds, but Mr. Crowther has not done it and it is not immediately obvious. One is led to the suspicion that the simplicities are less in Mr. Bergman and his film than they are in the reviewer.

We have no wish to make Mr. Bergman and his films into a cause, however interesting they are. We are concerned only that serious critics can so readily dismiss without apparent consideration the artistic merits of a film simply because it flows from tenets which, failing to accept, they do not trouble to understand. We are not, in this instance, most immediately concerned with whether either Mr. Bergman or Mr. Crowther believes in miracles. The entire point is that the movie can be judged apart from personal beliefs, as one judges works so disparate as Bronte's "No Coward Soul Is Mine" and *The Brothers Karamazov*. A final judgment may be made in other than artistic terms, but we have some distance to travel before final judgments and it doesn't help to start off on the wrong foot in the wrong direction.

OLD RELIABLE A.E.C.

THE PROBLEMS involved in nuclear disarmament are huge, and to make any headway with them the nation needs all the expert knowledge available. It would seem that our first source of such knowledge would be the U.S. government's own specialized agency, the Atomic Energy Commission. But recent events point up the lamentable fact that the A.E.C. continues to be almost the last place a citizen can expect to find accurate and dependable information.

In the past, the A.E.C. has suppressed "unfavorable" data on fall-out, has regularly reported "no danger" from radioactive fall-out while other, non-

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government scientists, including a United Nations team, have reported otherwise, and has consistently taken positions which can fairly be described as pro-nuclear tests and anti-disarmament. Recently the A.E.C. made the headlines by suggesting that the Soviet Union was cheating on the test moratorium, that explosions in the U.S.S.R. were actually secret nuclear tests. Afterwards, although not in the headlines, it came out that the A.E.C. had no evidence whatsoever to support this idea, and was voicing only a completely non-scientific "suspicion."

A minimal comment on this, made with reluctance but with even larger concern, must be that the A.E.C. has gone dangerously far towards destroying public confidence in itself, and this in an area and at a time when public confidence in government is more vital and more urgent than ever.

MORE ON QUEENS COLLEGE

IN NEW YORK, charges and counter-charges over alleged anti-Catholic bias at Queens College continue to mount in number and stridency, making the situation even more unfortunate than it was before. Our editorial on the subject, a month ago, cited the contradictory statements of the State Commission Against Discrimination and spokesmen for the College, and concluded by saying that "Catholics have a responsibility not to be overly sensitive, not to imagine that their religion, rather than real personal shortcomings, is the cause of their every frustration and rebuff. But non-Catholics too have a responsibility, to reexamine their assumptions in relation to Catholics . . . to make sure that their 'liberalism' does not include tacit 'exceptions'."

In the intervening weeks, the Catholic Teachers Association of Brooklyn was granted an hour-long conference with the Mayor of New York and issued a statement highly critical of the New York Board of Higher Education and its chairman Gustave Rosenberg; the Board declared its "unreserved" support of its chairman and confidence in his integrity; S.C.A.D. filed an additional affidavit with the State Supreme Court, pointing out that the agency has conducted eighty-two investigations of alleged bias by public educational agencies without having its jurisdiction challenged and charging the Board of Higher Education with "inaccuracies" in the presentation of its case to the court; most recently, the City College chapter of American Association of University Professors released a resolution expressing "complete confidence in and support of the Board chairman and the president of Queens College."

There the matter stands, but not for long, obviously. There will be further developments, further charges, contradictions, denials—and bitterness.

Our own position on the dispute is like that of many citizens, we suspect. We are troubled by its contradictions, grieved by its bitterness—and still not satisfied by the declarations that the S.C.A.D. investigation was incompetent, unfair and outside its proper jurisdiction. We regret that many of the "anti-S.C.A.D." statements often do not mention this state body at all, or the fact that it conducted an investigation, but simply affirm a trust in the integrity of the school officials involved. We wish that spokesmen for the Board would deal with the large fact (perhaps explainable) of the surprisingly small proportion of Catholics on the staff of Queens —out of 425, 22 with tenure, 15 non-permanent and 8 non-teaching positions. We wish too that someone would explain to us how S.C.A.D., a highly respected and valued state agency, could suddenly lose all its objectivity and even technical competence.

These are only some of a great number of confusing and disturbing aspects of the Queens College case. Like every citizen of New York we would like to see these questions resolved, but we do not believe they can be resolved by lofty denials, nor by attacks on the good faith of the disputants. In this connection, the only local newspaper which editorialized on this case, to our knowledge, praised the Board of Higher Education and its chairman and deplored the "irresponsible, intemperate attack from a group of teachers over oft-investigated, oft-disproved charges of anti-Catholic bias." The editorial made no mention whatsoever of the S.C.A.D. findings.

It is this attitude, we think, which produces much of the Catholic irritation and resentment. Perhaps the attacks are intemperate and irresponsible—the facts should make this clear—but most decidedly the charges have *not* been "oft-investigated, oft-disproved."

If this affair is to have a happy outcome—as we earnestly hope it will—we think that the New York Board of Higher Education, or the Mayor, will have to do more than deny or ignore the S.C.A.D. findings, or try to block the S.C.A.D. report through legal maneuvers. In the meantime, we can do no more than renew our urging that Catholics observe their responsibilities scrupulously, and that non-Catholics be aware of theirs, especially "their assumptions in relation to Catholics."

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Catholics and Race

There have been very few imaginative attempts on the part of Catholics to face the problems frankly

by MATHEW AHMANN

THERE ARE about forty-five organized Catholic interracial groups around the country which have as their specific purpose the advancement of projects to secure interracial justice and to help create the climate of interracial charity or love which is necessary for a genuine integration in America. In the past, one of the biggest services these groups performed, for Catholics and for the Church, was to act as a kind of vanguard, to keep speaking publicly of the principles to which the Church of Christ was committed. They acted as catalysts within the Church. Most of these interracial groups had, as they still have, informal and affectionate ties to Father John LaFarge and the pioneering of the Catholic Interracial Council movement in New York. But systematic program efforts by these groups were often lacking. Only the Commission on Human Rights of the now defunct Catholic Committee for the South provided organized services for large areas of the Church.

However, in 1958 the Catholic Bishops decided together that their unified voice as moral teachers would help bring an end to confusion for Catholic communities experiencing racial problems, and would also help bring the light of Christ to a mounting problem of opposition to the 1954 school decision of the Supreme Court of the United States. In their statement the Bishops appealed to all Americans to take the lead from the racist. They said "For the sake of generations of future Americans, and indeed of all humanity, we cannot fail."

Since the 1954 Supreme Court decision, our newspapers have reported a tremendous amount of racial news. Most of it has centered on the resistance of some Southerners to the desegregation of public schools, but an increasing amount of interest has centered on what could well be our most vicious racial problem—the problem of housing discrimination in the North.

Mr. Ahmann is executive director of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice. This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.

With all the news of desegregation of the public schools, what actually are the accomplishments in the South? A current Southern Regional Council report tallied 3,020,727 Negro pupils in the South as of the close of the past school year. Of all these three million Negro pupils, only 181,020 were in integrated school situations. That comes to less than six per cent, and most of the integration was in the border South. There was not a single Negro pupil in an integrated public school in Louisiana; none in Alabama; none in Georgia; none in Mississippi; none in South Carolina. Today, after six years of litigation, a handful of Negro pupils have a precarious foothold in integrated situations in Louisiana.

JUST PRIOR to and after the Brown *vs.* Board of Education decision in 1954, the symbols of integration in the South were Catholic. There was the Catholic Committee of the South; Bishop Waters' action in North Carolina; Archbishop Ritter's integration of the schools and institutions of the diocese of St. Louis; and the pastoral letter written by Archbishop Rummel. But the symbols of interracial progress in the South today, and in the past few years, while largely Negro, have all been Protestant. Martin Luther King; the Montgomery Improvement Association; Rev. James Lawson; Vanderbilt University; ministers accompanying Negro youngsters to all-white schools; statements by ministerial alliances. I admire and would encourage the interracial movement in Protestant churches. Their congregations are beginning to come to grips with the racial problem in Southern Protestantism, and I realize that to a large extent the battle of the South has to be fought in that environment. I am grateful that the symbols we see express the best that is in Christianity. But I am saddened that Catholic activity in the interracial movement in the South has in recent years all but come to a halt.

Recently, the sit-in movement has decisively changed

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the tempo of the interracial movement in the South for the better. I have heard groups of young students plan actions all Christians wished they had the courage to try. When and where these actions will break out, I do not know. But young people are teaching our country and our Church a great lesson: they feel a responsibility for their conscience. And the sit-in movement is obviously inspired by Christianity: its symbols and the justifications it appeals to are Christian; also Christian is the strong tradition justifying civil disobedience in the case of unjust laws which gravely harm the social order. Needless to say, the sit-in movement should be encouraged.

The Southern states of our country are manifestly going through an extensive period of change. And perhaps the most basic is not racial change at all, but the economic change the South is undergoing. For the South is becoming industrialized and rich. It is developing its own urban manufacturing centers. The rural tenant farmer is on his way out. This change has been underway for some time, and it will still take years to be completed. But while economic change is most basic in the South, the largest immediate effect on public values, or on a commonly accepted system of public morality, will come from changes in interracial relations. Interracial change is the most immediate in its impact on people's emotions, on their consciences.

Consequently, if the Church wishes twenty-five or fifty or a hundred years from now to see all people in the South able to appeal to a commonly accepted public morality, it is in the interracial sphere that the Church has to become vigorously active again. The relation between significant leadership in the interracial area and public morality, now and in the future, is only too clear, I am afraid, in these typical examples.

In Little Rock, in Louisiana, in Mississippi, the civic leaders of the near future are going to be the citizens who are active in the "Save Our Schools" campaigns today. Yet in New Orleans, a community perhaps sixty per cent Catholic, and certainly quite Catholic in its culture, only one well-known lay Catholic could be found to take a leadership role in the S.O.S. movement. The "Save Our Schools" group there had about fourteen hundred members, incidentally, in August of this year.

A few years ago the whole School Board in New Orleans was composed of citizens who were Catholics. Today the only Catholic on the School Board is also, unfortunately, the only racist on the Board. There is of course no reason that Catholics, even if they are a majority in a community, should dominate the civic movements of that community. Yet if one is concerned about the participation of lay Catholics in the civic leadership of the future, one can clearly see the trend.

One friend in New Orleans has told me that the clergy will not realize the extent to which Catholic citizens lack influence in civic affairs until someday a pastor calls city hall and asks for a favor, and is refused. Perhaps this is an unfortunate example, but it illustrates the problem of the absence of lay Catholic leadership in the interracial movement in the South today. Furthermore, the amount of anti-Catholic feeling in the moderate interracial movements of Louisiana is enormous. Yet the Catholic population in Louisiana could lead us to the first real breakthrough in interracial progress in the Deep South. And in other Southern states the Church, for various social reasons, is more significant in people's minds than its small membership would indicate.

On the hopeful side, we do have at least the beginnings of a new and invigorated Catholic interracial movement in the South. There is the Catechism on interracial justice written by Bishop Fletcher of Little Rock. Little Rock is not the Deep South, but who would deny that it is symbolic of the Deep South? Bishop Fletcher has begun the only diocesan-wide educational program on interracial justice, which I know of, in the country. A group of men, along with Bishop Fletcher, have also founded a significant new Catholic Interracial Council. This was the first new Council established in the South in a number of years, during a period in which five or six Councils completely disbanded.

Bishop Fletcher's beginning is of great significance, both because the scene is symbolic of the Deep South and because Bishop Fletcher is himself a deeply respected native-Southern prelate. His program is being watched with increasing interest in other parts of the South. In a pastoral letter to the Catholics in his care, he has stated that silence on the interracial problem is not constructive, and that positive programs of education must get underway.

Recent weeks have also brought the integration of a Catholic high school in Miami and the integration of the first three grades of a parochial school in Houston. These are almost the only such actions of the last three years, outside of the lonely appeals of Archbishop Rummel in New Orleans.

In New Orleans itself, just a few months ago, the Archbishop called together a group of Catholic laymen, who pledged themselves to begin a program of education there. And for the first time in three years in New Orleans there are the beginnings of a Catholic Interracial Council which may last, and a new lay movement in support of sensible desegregation within the institutions and organizations of the Church and in civic life.

Finally, the Knights of Peter Claver, historically a Negro counterpart to the Knights of Columbus, have been creating increasing interest among their members in the interracial movement. Members of this organization, impressed by their obligation to the fraternal

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correction of the Church, are helping to form new Catholic Interracial Councils.

IN THE NORTH the heresy of racism is propagated mostly by the housing problem. Though an increasing amount of Southern segregationist money is being spent in the North, and though we find increasing evidence of the operation of "Citizens Council" activity in Northern suburban areas, most of the problems found in race and housing stem from the North itself.

For example, John Ducey of the Real Estate Research Corporation says that between 1950 and 1957 enough homes and apartments changed hands from whites to non-whites in Chicago to house the total population of the city of Indianapolis. But this has, without significant exception, only meant the rapid and destructive expansion of the Negro ghetto. And Chicago is only a type of what has been happening in other large Northern cities, and in smaller cities as well.

The rapid and unchecked growth of the racial ghetto—compounded by almost absolute patterns of discrimination within the real estate profession, the home financing industry, and by unimaginative policies in the housing programs of the Federal government—is not only destroying the innards of our cities more rapidly than it is possible to improve them, but is also wreaking untold harm on the values and consciences of white and Negro people as well.

Without question, no other institution of our society could do more than the Church to solve this race and housing problem. For among the most powerful community institutions surrounding the racial ghettos in the North, in city after city, are the Catholic parishes. To date there have been very few imaginative attempts on the part of Catholic people or institutions to face the problems frankly and to work to solve them.

Catholic people and Catholic parochial institutions in central city areas, and especially in areas which are going to experience racial change, must begin, support and contribute money to strong community organization movements. These movements must be created to maintain good neighborhood qualities, while Negroes are allowed to rent apartments and purchase homes. Their ultimate aim must be to create permanently integrated neighborhoods.

To do this the Church will have to cooperate with all the religious and other institutions in a neighborhood. A parish cannot hope to do this task alone. Nor would a healthy neighborhood life for all people grow out of an exclusively Catholic movement. Catholic men, women and pastors beginning such movements must realize that they will have to educate their people on racial justice, as well as wage a difficult fight with the real estate and financial professions of their cities, and in most cases with their city governments, which usually are afraid to face squarely the problem of a changing neighborhood. Such a program, in neighborhood after neighborhood, should have strong backing from the whole Catholic community of a metropolitan area.

Any realistic appraisal of social trends in our cities will indicate that the racial ghettos are not going to pass out of existence for a long, long time. While we open the rest of our city and our suburbs to Negro mobility, we need to develop programs which will improve housing quality and social services in the ghetto itself. Neighborhood efforts to work for effective enforcement of building and zoning codes must be founded. Community groups must participate in the development and planning of urban renewal programs so that they treat minority families fairly. New methods of financing rehabilitation and conservation efforts in low quality or depreciating neighborhoods must be worked out. Community organization and social services must be placed in the neighborhood center of the parish.

An active program of integrating our all-white suburbs and our suburban parishes must also be begun. We cannot afford the embarrassment and harm resulting from "Levittowns" and "Deerfields." Catholic parish communities, in cooperation usually with other religious groups, must originate programs of inviting Negroes to move into their suburbs as permanent neighbors. At present, only religious groups are strong enough to outweigh the negative influences which give rise to racial battles in suburban life. Moreover, open support of the churches for a Negro family moving into a suburb can be the strongest possible stabilizing factor in such a situation. With the support of the churches, the process of suburban integration can go forward with good speed.

AND GOOD speed is needed. George Schermer, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, says that we must think on the scale of enabling four to eight thousand Negro families to become a part of integrated suburban life every year in our larger city areas, if we hope at all to save a decent life for the cities. Without the churches this will be impossible. With the churches, and especially with the active support of the Catholic Church, we will be able to find the ways to enable this movement to occur smoothly.

The alternative to integrated suburban patterns may well be racial tensions across political boundaries. In not too many years, our inner cities will be dominated politically by non-whites; and they will be surrounded by the noose of the all-white suburbs. If we allow the present racial change in our cities to go unchecked, we will be freezing an ecological pattern which will have an effect on the values of our people for hundreds of years, and which will be a more difficult pattern to break than segregation now is in the schools of the South.

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So we have in the South and in the North great challenges for an invigorated interracial movement in the Church. With the stakes as high as they are, our Catholic Interracial Councils and other groups have to develop more extensive programming. In many cases we cannot realistically maintain that we are having the effect on the problem we want, unless we can see our way to supporting staffed programs on a much larger scale than we are at present. This, in turn, will call for increased efforts by lay Catholics and the institutions of the Church to help finance lay social action.

It was precisely because these horizons faced the Church that the Catholic Interracial Councils recently founded the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice. Members of the Catholic Interracial Councils, largely voluntary groups to date, realized that they needed professional services, that they needed increasing program aids, that they needed increasing help in financing their programs. They needed these things in order to make a greater impact on the national levels of the civic life of our country, and to give in our time effective witness for the Church of Christ.

SAUDI ARABIA'S CADILLAC CRISIS

Black Gold, Red Ink

by JAMES DAVIDSON

AMERICA'S economic and political involvement in Saudi Arabia, an arid country of four and one-half million of the world's most primitive people, has probably been more general and lasted longer than in the case of any other Middle Eastern country. Despite its forbidding deserts, its religious fanaticism and its backward customs, Saudi Arabia has the strategic Air Command airbase which is closest to Russia's heartland; one of America's biggest single business investments abroad; a small American town complete with television, Little League, green lawns and water sprinklers; and eight or nine thousand Americans. Despite 120 degree heat, there are bowling alleys, American policemen, fresh food from America, and drugstores selling hamburgers and malted milk to frecklefaced American kids.

Dahran, Saudia Arabia, is, in short, a bit of America transferred to the Arabian Desert. And for this and other reasons Americans have followed postwar events in Saudi Arabia with a close if not always satisfied eye.

Oil, as is well known, is Saudi Arabia's almost exclusive source of wealth. Discovered in 1938 and seriously developed after the war, Saudi oil is now being produced at a rate of four hundred million barrels (fifty-three million tons) a year by Aramco, an American company owned jointly by Standard Oil Company of California (30%), Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (30%), Texas Oil Company (30%), and Socony Mobil Oil Company (10%).

Saudi Arabia's share of this wealth has reached $250 million yearly, but for about ten years, ending in 1958, Saudi Arabia's royal family and a few rich tribal sheiks and merchants made themselves famous—or infamous—around Europe and the rest of the world for lavish spending, the likes of which had not been seen since the palmiest days of India's Maharajahs. While the bulk of Saudi Arabia's four and one-half million people remained in almost pre-historic backwardness, a few thousand princes and sheiks managed to do the unbelievable: move from camel-hair tents to air conditioned palaces, spend a million dollars a day in oil royalties, and find this amount not enough to satisfy their copious wants for Cadillacs, cabarets and cosmopolitan concubines.

They spent so much, in fact, that in early 1958 the Middle East's second greatest supplier of oil was on the point of bankruptcy. Foreign exchange resources were not only gone but foreign banks and exporters refused to add to the country's already seriously overdrawn credits. Practically all gold and foreign exchange backing for the currency was gone, and the Saudi *rial,* after dropping on the international money market from three and a half *rials* to the U.S. dollar to six, was in danger of becoming completely useless. They had borrowed all they could on future oil production, and they had contracted for Cadillacs and air conditioning plants on which payments were now due from funds that not only didn't exist but wouldn't exist for several years to come.

IT WAS in these circumstances that a political crisis developed in Saudi Arabia, centering mainly around the fifty sons of late King Abdul Aziz Al Saud and the fifty sons of present King Saud. King Saud's attempt to bribe Nasser's principal lieutenant in Syria to kill the U.A.R. president had been widely publicized, and

James Davidson is the pseudonym of an American journalist who has for many years lived and worked in the Middle East.

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the House of Saud was in such disrepute that something had to be done.

Crown Prince Faisal took over the government as Prime, Foreign, and Finance Minister and King Saud set off with two hundred retainers for a visit to Baden Baden. From then on financial reforms came, one after the other.

The country's first state budget was organized. The regal princes and sheiks were given a fixed income rather than free and endless access to Saudi oil resources. Exchange and import restrictions were applied, and the Saudi *rial* was gradually pegged at higher and higher rates.

For a year and a half Saudi Arabia lay economically quiet as the damage of previous years was mended. Cairo night clubs suffered from the absence of the robed and goateed Arabians who earlier were known to reward favorite dancers with shining Cadillacs. Saudi merchants grumbled at import restrictions and refused to buy abroad because the government-supported exchange rate went higher and higher. All development programs were stopped dead until government debts could be paid. Despite all the grumbling, however, favorable results of the new policy began to show themselves.

Foreign exchange backing for the currency rose from nearly nil to a full 100%. The exchange rate rose to four and one-half *rials* to the dollar, and the Government officially devalued the currency to that level from the previous three and one-half *rial* level. Profits on the devaluation went to pay the country's debts abroad or to stabilize imports of basic commodities like rice and wheat. Then, as more exchange built up, the import and currency controls were lifted and the Saudi *rial* was made completely convertible. Finally, Saudi expenditures equalled receipts, and the sheiks and princes pored over budget sheets for the first time in their lives. Relatively speaking, at least, Saudi Arabia was becoming a somewhat fiscally sophisticated country.

By early 1960 the new financial policies had definitely proved their worth, and observers began congratulating the two men who had brought them all about: Crown Prince Faisal and the Pakistani banker Faisal had borrowed from the International Monetary Fund, Mr. Anwar Ali. Anwar Ali had supplied the reforms, and Faisal had supplied the power and determination without which nothing could have been done in a country like Saudi Arabia, "Prospects are now good," an American banker in Jeddah said recently, "for steady improvement of trade and accelerated economic development within the sound monetary and fiscal policies that have already been laid down."

Economic development in Saudi Arabia usually means more roads, to develop and unify the large country (ten times the size of Britain). Construction is something else that should begin again: construction of residential buildings, government offices, hospitals and possibly a few more palaces. Some factories for making such building materials as cement, building blocks, building boards, and the like, have already been completed, but most things are imported from abroad.

THERE ARE signs of improved Saudi-Western relations in the political field as well. British-Saudi relations have been poor for some time because of the Buriemi Oasis dispute (Britain supports the Sultan of Oman's claim to the potentially oil-rich oasis against Saudi Arabia). U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold is sending a personal representative to Saudi Arabia to investigate and report on the dispute that caused a rupture in Anglo-Saudi diplomatic relations, and both sides, happily, now appear eager to reopen relations. Whereas Saudi Arabia previously called a settlement of the Buriemi affair a prerequisite for renewed relations with Britain, they now ask only that negotiation machinery be set up in advance. Mr. Hammarskjold's envoy, according to sources informed on Saudi affairs, shouldn't have much difficulty getting negotiations started again. A settlement, of course, may be another thing. Oil, as everyone knows, is the crucial word around the shores of the Persian Gulf, and empty stretches of sand that no one cared about thirty or forty years ago, when many of these territorial agreements were made, have become subjects of bitter dispute.

Borders and concessions aren't the only things disputed, either. In the Middle East there is an almost constant battle going on between producing countries and oil companies. Saudi Arabia is no exception. "We spent 5% of our time producing oil here," Aramco officials have been heard to say, "and the rest of the time negotiating our agreement with the Government."

Sheik Abdullah el Tariki, Saudi Petroleum Department's American-educated director, leads the battle with Aramco. He also has some much respected ideas about Arab oil as a whole. His principal efforts are for a greater than 50% cut of the company's net profits and for an "integrated" company—that is, one company producing, transporting, refining and distributing Saudi oil. Profit-sharing with Saudi Arabia would then, of course, come on the whole oil business from beginning to end.

Japan has already agreed to this integrated arrangement on the oil it is producing from its concession offshore from the "Neutral Zone" between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The Japanese company (the Arabia Oil Company), unlike the major Western companies, completely controls all phases of its business from wells to petrol tanks and can make the integrated arrange-

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ment with the Arabs. Aramco, owned by Esso, Calso, Texaco and Mobiloil, is part of a complex international arrangement, getting its tankers here, its refineries there and its service stations somewhere else. Integration, the major oil companies claim, is an impossibility for them.

Although possibly a bit subdued these days by the abundance of oil on the world market, the battle nevertheless goes on. For example, Saudi Arabia signed an agreement a few years ago with Greek shipowner Onassis to transport all increases in Saudi oil output after the contract date. The oil companies, which had previously been transporting all the oil, took Saudi Arabia to court.

The Arab nations, through the Arab League, have been trying to band together through yearly petroleum congresses. Proposals have come out of the Congresses for unifying Arab selling and concession demands, for an all-Arab tanker company, an all-Arab pipeline, and an all-Arab development fund. The Saudi Petroleum Department's legal adviser (an American, of all things) upheld a sovereign country's right to break any agreement with a private company, a suggestion that is so obviously full of danger that few Arab officials ever comment on it.

Middle East oil is definitely beginning to boil. Though it is far too early to predict what changes will finally be made between Western consumers and Middle Eastern suppliers and how they will be made, it is almost certain that radical changes are coming. And when they come they will affect the economic climate of the whole area.

Just now the Arabs are angry about a reduction of roughly ten percent in Persian Gulf crude oil prices, the second in a year. They want more say in oil company policy at all stages, and, since nearly all Arabs can agree that the oil companies are "imperialistic," "monopolistic," "capitalistic," and a few other things they deem unpleasant, they may be able to produce some unity through the Arab League.

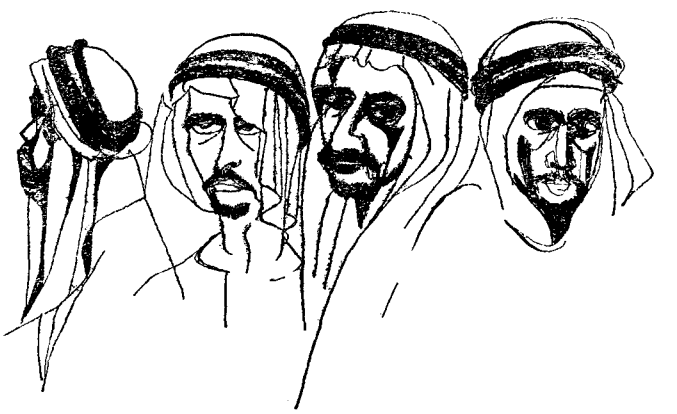
IN SAUDI ARABIA, future oil policy—and any other Saudi policy, for that matter—will rest on the outcome of the rivalry between King Saud and his brother Prince Faisal. The two have contrasting personalities reminiscent of Shakespearian drama. While Saud is flamboyant and fantastically extravagant, Faisal is almost neurotically reserved and so careful about money that he rides around in a battered old DeSoto rather than in Saud's cavalcade of Cadillacs and motorcycle outriders. Like Khrushchev, Faisal even rides up front with the driver at times.

On the other hand, though, King Saud favors sticking to the concession agreements, while Faisal tends to follow President Nasser's more flexible philosophy regarding Arab agreements with foreign companies. While Saud is a figure out of the Middle Ages, Faisal, for good or for evil, is more linked with modern Arab nationalism.

Just now Prince Faisal is said to hold more power among the princes and sheiks. But reports have been coming out lately of maneuvering by King Saud for more popularity among Faisal's traditional followers, the town-dwelling Arab nationalists. (The rural tribes instinctively go for Saud's traditional political methods, *e.g.*, marrying tribal girls for a few days, lavishing wealth on them, their families and any resulting offspring, and then terminating the hasty affairs in divorce).

The methods Saud is using to win city support are filled with more danger for himself and his family than for anyone else, however. Saud has come out in favor of a constitution, partially elected local councils, a parliament and more freedom of press and expression. Playing with fire never described King Saud's behavior more accurately than it does here; he could bring the whole Saudi house crumbling to the ground. What would come afterward would be anyone's guess, but it is fairly sure that any Saudi agreement with the West would be in great danger under a revolutionary Government.

Chances of any abrupt political change in Saudi Arabia, however, are still slim. Though King Saud and Prince Faisal seem to disagree on method, those who know the country well feel that both realize their existence rests on fundamental family unity. The forces of radical change—*i.e.*, young nationalistic town-dwellers—do not have much power outside of the army which has intentionally been kept weak, backward and short of ammunition. The rural Bedouin tribes, in any case, could easily crush an army revolution, and the rural tribes, from all reports, are solidly and lucratively tied up with the royal family. Therefore, while tension persists and changes are in the wind, there isn't much likelihood of their coming in a way that would seriously disrupt Saudi Arabia's traditional political and economic relations with Europe and North America. Indeed, prospects now are very good for improved economic and political cooperation with the West.



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Under present conditions
strikes make less and less sense

Striking Out

by THOMAS R. BROOKS

STRIKES, like words, are what you make of them. What, exactly, the collective bargainers currently make of strikes is difficult to discern. Both sides are in the habit of claiming "victory." There is nothing new about this. But today the public no longer has a handy cents-per-hour yardstick for evaluating the conflicting claims, since wages are not an issue in much of the current collective bargaining.

The issues at stake—the "right to manage" and to cut costs, in management's view; the speed-up and loss of jobs, in the eyes of unionists—are far from clear to the general public although they have been behind every major strike over the last two years and will continue to cause strikes in the foreseeable future. The setting of a price on the complex, sometimes vague, changes in contract clauses governing work rules, job classifications and the like confuses even the experts, not to speak of the rest of us. Perplexed editorialists cry out, "Why?" "Is this strike necessary?" and make angry demands for "machinery that will eliminate such wasteful disputes."

The recent General Electric strike is a case in point. The strike folded, in part, because it was pointless, an exercise in futility. Members of the International Union of Electrical Workers struck and lost three weeks pay —only to return to work on substantially the same terms G.E. offered at the outset. As a result, the company will also have a freer hand in exercising its so-called "management prerogatives." Something, clearly, is wrong with this pattern. Strikes, after all, are a tactic—a weapon not always freely chosen, but a weapon nonetheless. Now, however, the weapon is often a blank. What has happened?

The development from "primitive unionism to accomodation," in the phrase of George E. Brooks, has worked a corresponding change in the character of strike activity. Strikes are now geared to the periodicity of contract negotiations. They are, as someone has said, "the unseen guest" at every negotiation. How the guest behaves depends upon many complicated factors—the history of the industry, the issues at stake, the state of the economy, and so on. Significantly, however, the guest is ushered out when the new contract is signed and not seen again as a rule until the next time around. "Wildcat" walkouts are frowned on by management and the unions alike.

IN THE PAST, strikes were much different in character, not so neatly timed to suit the conveniences of management or trade union bureaucracy. A strike was much more a naked test of power. Issues, too, were clearer when the right to recognition or the righting of an inequitous wage were at issue.

The strike, however, continues as a test of power; it influences the nature of the bargain struck between union and management. Careful consideration is given by both sides as to its possible timing. When should the contract run out? What will business be like a year from now? Two years? Five? These questions must be answered, or guessed at, as both parties jockey for the favored position.

However, a subtle change has occurred in the process. The strike, traditionally, is the weapon of the last resort. A quickie walkout of one or two days is one thing, but these days most collective bargaining strikes run longer. There is, after all, the complicated ritual accompanying them that must be followed through before one can push on to the real business of achieving a settlement. (There are exceptions, I know.) A long walkout is costly, something to be avoided.

And, in fact, with the exception of the United States, strike activity in the major industrial nations has declined steadily over the years. Even within the U.S., several industries, notably the needle trades, have a history of strike-free negotiations. U. S. industry, then, is an exception to what seems to be a historical trend in industrial societies where unions are recognized and accepted as essential to economic activity. Why? Unions, for their part, have no fondness for strikes. Indeed, the decline in strike activity is sharpest in those nations where the labor movement has the greatest power.

DANIEL BELL has given us one answer in a recent *Commentary* article. Once the corporate giants accepted collective bargaining, Bell argues, they

Mr. Brooks is an associate editor of *Current* and formerly assistant labor editor of *Business Week*.

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began to put it to use in their own interests. Unions not only represented the workers but also became a means of disciplining the work force; no-strike clauses were exchanged across the bargaining table for the dues check-off.

Of more interest, however, is the use to which the corporations put the collective bargaining process. As Bell persuasively argues, collective bargaining over the years became a part of the price-setting mechanism—the rationale, as it were, for administered prices. Each bargaining go-around in auto or steel, for example, became the justification for price increases. The net effect has been to help "install a mechanism whereby the large corporation is able to strengthen its price position in the market."

Strikes, then, can be seen as a means for giving verisimilitude to corporate claims of an inability to control increased costs in the face of union wage demands. Peaceful bargaining, *sans* strike activity, is not quite as convincing. One result is that in steel and auto there has been a minority of settlements *sans* strike.

Some six months before the 1959 steel strike began, I was asked by someone of importance in Wall Street what I thought would happen. I said that if there was a strike it would be a long one, a safe enough bit of speculation. "That's not such a bad thing, is it?" he shot back. He then launched into a cogent analysis as to why a two- or three-month steel strike would be good for the economy. "It would," he said, "guarantee a good last quarter for 1959, and a better first quarter for 1960, which should see us through the elections."

What impresses me as significant about this is not the Wall Streeter's prescience but the notion that a strike could serve as a recession-absorbing gimmick. Certainly, from this Charles Addams-ish point of view, a three-month strike is far better than a three-month layoff. For one thing, it's cheaper. A strike affects a company's unemployment experience rating less adversely, and there are probably other tax advantages, too.

What's more, a strike also obscures the real economic issues involved. It deflects attention from the corporate role in causing layoffs. The public reaction to a strike is not likely to be the same as its reaction to a major layoff. In addition, a long strike can be used as leverage to pry significant contract gains out of the unions. An attempt can be made to win so-called management rights. Work rules can be changed, control over job assignments wrested back from the union's none-too-sure hand.

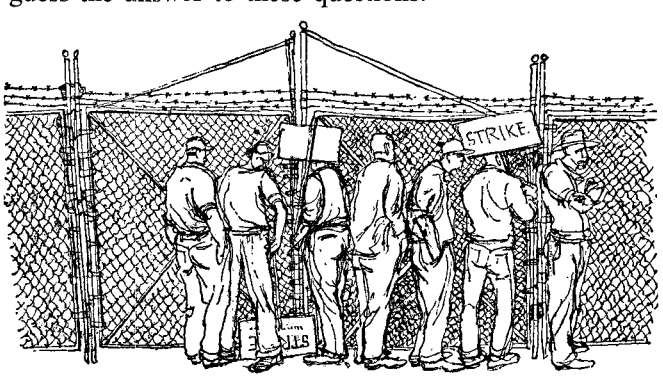
THIS IS what has changed in the character of collective bargaining over the last two years. Until the 1958 recession began, the giant unions got *quid pro quo* from giant management as a result of their periodic collective bargaining sessions. Pensions, supplementary unemployment benefits and other health and welfare benefits were won, along with some fairly hefty wage gains. But in 1958 the unions began to lose out. By now, for example, the much vaunted steel union victory of a year ago is all but pyrrhic. The industry is having its way in all the important matters that lay behind the murky fight over the famous Clause Four, the "management rights" issue. Those fortunate enough to be employed in the steel mills will get their first wage increase in over a year-and-a-half on December 1, the longest stretch without a wage hike for well-organized workers since the war.

To worry trade union leaders still further, more industry groups are taking up strike insurance. The airlines, the railroads and the newspaper publishers are examples of a trend that caused W. P. Kennedy, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, to exclaim: "Unless exposed for the false front it is, it will destroy or make meaningless the right to strike in this country." The unions plan to fight such insurance schemes next year by seeking legislation to outlaw them. But the odds are against a legislative victory on this issue.

Clearly, strikes make no sense at a time when the employer's whim can keep union members out on the bricks for two and three months, or even nine months, as has been the case in several key oil strikes. Are there alternatives?

Perhaps the unions will soon counter employer claims for "management rights" with a demand for the dropping of "no-strike" clauses in contracts. It is a move that would give the unions flexibility, enable them to hit management when it hurts rather than at a time to suit management's convenience. Is there some other way for the union to exert job control? To establish the worker's "property rights" in a job? Does political action provide a way out?

Can one, perhaps, hope that a break-up of the present pattern of collective bargaining, which is so open to the manipulative power of management, will restore to the unions that idealism that made the unions a part of the labor *movement?* Or will the unions strike other, more selfish bargains? It would be a brave, not to say foolhardy, man who would dare to guess the answer to these questions.



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THE SCREEN

FISH OR FOWL?

MOVIE PRODUCERS could save themselves a lot of grief if they'd decide where they're going before they start on a film. And sometimes it might even help if they'd have some vague idea as to what audience they were aiming at. All this may seem obvious enough, but it is brought to mind by several new rough-and-tumble movies which, although not entirely bad, could have been much better if their makers had been more careful during the preliminary stages.

In planning "North to Alaska," for instance, producer-director Henry Hathaway would have been wise to decide whether he was making a serious "western" set in the north or a satire kidding the whole genre. The plot, most of which is set in Alaska in 1900, mainly concerns John Wayne and his partners, Stewart Granger and Fabian, who have just struck it rich. Wayne goes to Seattle to bring back some machinery and Granger's fiancee, but finding the girl already married he returns with the machinery for the mine and a dancehall floozie for Granger. Falling for Wayne on the long trip back, this fancy lady, played by Capucine who is too beautiful and fancy for the role, will accept no substitute. The rest of this lengthy, over-produced film concentrates on two problems: how do the partners foil villainous claim-jumper Ernie Kovacs; how will Capucine, helped by two of the partners, trap the third? Since "North to Alaska" adds little except Fabian's singing to the variations on this familiar theme, there is practically no suspense. Mr. Hathaway would have been smart, I think, to play it and pace "North to Alaska" as a straight comedy; some of it really is rather amusing in a slapstick sort of way, especially the all-out fisticuffs in deep mud that outspoils "The Spoilers."

IT WAS a good idea to make an American version of the Japanese film, "Seven Samurai," about the swordsmen hired to defend a farming village from bandits, and the new movie, now set in Mexico and called "The Magnificent Seven," has been well produced and directed by John Sturges. Unfortunately, however, once again the project was not carefully planned as a whole. The first half of the film is excellent, with gripping scenes which show Eli Wallach as the evil bandit leader descending with his band of robbers on the helpless village, and the villagers, knowing the bandits will return again and again, going to a U.S. border town for help and hiring seven gunmen to defend them. Although Yul Brynner isn't exactly at his best as the head of these hired guns, Sturges has directed the recruiting scenes with such force and has made the gunmen's preparations against the coming bandits so interesting that one can hardly wait for the outcome. The last half of the movie, however, peters out, and while it makes its points that gunmen always lose and those who live by the sword, etc., the final scenes are rather talky and stodgy. The Mexican settings are fine, and the cast come through well enough, especially Charles Bronson, James Coburn, Steve McQueen and Horst Buchholz among the magnificent seven. No doubt the main trouble with "The Magnificent Seven" is William Roberts' script, which, for all I know, may follow the Japanese original very closely. I remember I liked the Japanese film, but on many foreign movies perhaps we are fortunate to have subtitles that translate only some of the dialogue—dialogue that may often be pretty banal and better left unheard. "The Magnificent Seven" would have made an excellent silent film.

THE ITALIANS, British and French got together to co-produce "The Savage Innocents." They also should have got together with producer Maleno Malenotti and director-scriptwriter Nicholas Ray to decide what audience they were aiming at. Handsomely photographed way up north in the Arctic wastes of Canada and with Anthony Quinn giving a first-rate performance as Inuk, the Eskimo hunter, "The Savage Innocents" aims to tell what life among the Eskimos is really like. What's more, it aims to tell this in a semi-documentary fashion, from the point of view of the Eskimo himself.

On the whole, "The Savage Innocents" is quite successful, and Quinn, Yoko Tani, a lovely Japanese actress who portrays his wife, and several others convey well the rigors and strange mores and morals of the Arctic wilds. However, for all its authenticity, much of the film is too naive and repetitious to hold adults during its excessive running time, and much of it with its frank revelations about the Eskimos' sex life is hardly suitable fare for children. This is too bad, because director Ray is particularly adept in showing how difficult it is for one group of people to understand another. When Quinn, without meaning to, kills a white missionary who refuses to eat his maggot-infested gruel and sleep with his wife, the Eskimo hardly realizes the seriousness of his crime—which is to him, in fact, no crime at all—and he is utterly baffled later when two state troopers come after him. Because of its unusual point of view, "The Savage Innocents" will no doubt appeal to special audiences, even though its subject matter deserves a larger following.

ALSO WORTHY of more attention than it is likely to get is the story of Major John Wesley Powell and his nine companions who first explored the

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Colorado River in 1869 and whose exploits are recounted in "Ten Who Dared." Beautifully filmed in color along the Colorado and in the Grand Canyon, this movie has many a tense moment as the ten men make their perilous way on the dangerous river and its banks.

But the film lacks the over-all care and thought that Walt Disney usually puts into his productions, and Lawrence Edward Watkin's script, though based on the journals written by Powell, is a melodramatic affair without much depth of characterization. The men whom Powell (John Beal) gathered for his trip were a pretty scurrilous lot, and the actors who portray them (including Brian Keith, Ben Johnson, James Drury, L. Q. Jones and others) seem to get a kick out of hamming up the roles. This probably won't disturb young fry in the audience, who will no doubt be duly impressed with the canyons, rapids, snakes and Indians encountered along the way. Less impressionable grown-ups may be willing to leave "Ten Who Dared" and its geological wonders to the trilobites.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"DISCRIMINATION AND QUEENS COLLEGE"

Flushing, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: As a Catholic professor at Queens College, I share with Commonweal its "distress" over the dispute between the Board of Higher Education and The State Committee Against Discrimination ("Discrimination and Queens College," Oct. 21).

The situation at Queens does indeed result from a "confused and complicated series of events." However, as an admirer and promoter of Commonweal for the past twenty-five years *I was distressed* over the implication drawn by the editorial. Although obviously trying to give a fair picture, the editorial seems to conclude that "complaints and evidence" have been dismissed by administration and staff without proper consideration. It would seem that Commonweal has taken most of its material from newspaper reports, and consequently fails to give its readers a comprehensive picture of the situation at the college. By so doing it plays into the hands of those who continually brand the college anti-Catholic.

Because litigation is underway I shall not comment on specific charges of bias, but I feel that I can mention a few facts concerning the general atmosphere on the campus and also state some evidence regarding my personal experience during the past ten years. This may help to broaden the scope of information which has been available to the general public.

Since the college was founded there have always been Catholic members on the administrative staff. There are Catholic members on the College Committee on Personnel and Budget and other major committees. There is a large active Newman Club with a Chaplain who is admired and respected by the non-Catholic members of the faculty.

As a member of the Department of Education I was on our Appointments Committee for seven years. Religious commitment has never been a factor in hiring or in recommending for tenure or promotion. We have called the Placement Divisions of Catholic as well as secular universities in seeking candidates for positions on our staff. Personally, I have never been discriminated against in any way. These facts were reported by me to the investigating committee of the Board of Higher Education and to the S.C.A.D. representative two years ago. At that time S.C.A.D. told us that their inquiry was preliminary and informal. I expected to be called back for a formal hearing, but, as far as I know, no such hearing has been conducted.

As evidence of the attention given to religious education in our department I would like to point out that our students (future teachers) visit parochial schools, and that we frequently invite educators from Catholic schools to speak to our education classes.

I agree with The Commonweal that liberals are frequently less concerned about Catholic prejudice than prejudice against other groups. I also know that sometimes the lack of interest is due to bitter experience, or misunderstanding. The only way this can be remedied is to provide continuing sincere dialogue. On the whole, I have found the atmosphere on our campus conducive to this kind of healthy exchange of ideas. I have never hesitated to express my views on religious issues.

As for the episode regarding the offensive material in the student newspaper, I openly criticized these articles as did many of my non-Catholic colleagues. Often we try to settle the day-by-day problems, that

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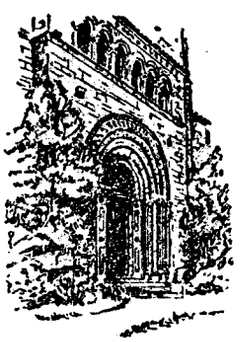

Prospective students should make early application

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arise in any college, within our own family group, and much college housekeeping and housecleaning does not get into the local papers.

It is encouraging to me as a "veteran" teacher to find the younger college professors throughout the country both better informed and less defensive than those who were educated in the twenties and thirties—a decade of religious illiteracy—when professors believed that intellectualism was incompatible with strong religious commitment. These days, we all hope, are passing.

HELEN F. STOREN,
Associate Professor of Education,
Queens College.

"PUERTO RICAN PASTORAL"

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO THE EDITORS: Your comment of Nov. 4 on the Puerto Rican pastoral letter forbidding Catholics there to vote for candidates of the Popular Democratic Party failed to take into consideration a matter I suspect is basic to the whole question of episcopal intervention into the political life of Catholics of the territory involved.

Your editorial, as editorials in the press generally, was prompted by the fact that Puerto Rico is American territory and a territory which (though your editorial did not specifically allude to this point) could some day become our fifty-first State. But your premise appeared to be the same as everyone else's: that is, that the people of Puerto Rico are living under the Federal Constitution. They are not!

True it is that Puerto Rico is American territory; true it is also that some day Puerto Rico may become a State (though this is doubtful, if one is allowed to base a doubt on the attitude of the people generally toward the United States). But the fact remains that Puerto Rico enjoys a governmental status unique under the American flag. Puerto Rico is not only not a State, it is not a territory in the same sense as the Virgin Islands or any other U.S. territory.

The Congress, by a special act adopted in 1950, allowed Puerto Rico to draw up its own constitution, distinct and separate from the Federal Constitution. Unless I am mistaken, Puerto Rico is the only territory to be so honored (if, indeed, honored is the word). Thus, with its own constitution, the Puerto Rican government is enabled to trespass on civil liberties and institute policies not merely repugnant to the peoples of the territory governed, but foreign to much of what is taken for granted in any of the fifty States and in any other U.S. territory.

I am not a constitutional lawyer, but I would suggest that before one indulges in any broad condemnation or even oblique criticism of the Puerto Rican hierarchy, he should first examine the rule of government under which Puerto Ricans live and the hierarchy operates. I think such a study would produce some startling surprises and would go far toward explaining the circumstances which led to the formation of the Christian Action Party and which motivated the hierarchy's pastoral letter.

I sympathize with the Puerto Rican Bishops in their dilemma. But, more particularly, I sympathize with a people who are required to live under a constitution which allows the government such broad determining powers in basic moral issues as birth control, sterilization, released time, etc.

Whatever all that, the entire controversy inevitably leads back to something you hinted at in your editorial: that in the Latin world things are quite different from the American world, from the points of view of both Church and State. But this is all the more reason to be guarded in evaluating the situation in Puerto Rico by mere American logic, and all the more reason to examine the constitutional conditions which give rise to the Puerto Rican phenomenon.

JOHN G. DEEDY, JR.,
Editor, the *Pittsburgh Catholic*.

University Park, Pa.

TO THE EDITORS: Many will join the editors of The Commonweal in their hope that the furore precipitated by the pastoral letter of the Puerto Rican bishops "may yet turn out to have performed a real service" (Nov. 4). It may lead to a clarification of "unsettled questions" relating to the propriety, even right, of a bishop to give his faithful precise direction in political matters.

Suppose, for example, that one bishop, Bishop McManus of Ponce, had forbidden the Catholics of his diocese to vote for Governor Marín. Suppose, next, that he had issued this directive from mere pique (Church history reveals occasional bishops using their positions to serve personal ends). Would the faithful of his diocese have been obliged to obey him under pain of sin? Does the Holy Spirit furnish a bishop special graces which enable him to see more clearly than the layman what is best for the Church? If the Holy Spirit does provide these graces, must the laity assume that their bishop is cooperating with them? St. Catherine of Siena upbraided several popes for not returning to Rome where they belonged, and what she said of those cardinals who repudiated their election of Urban VI was hardly ladylike. St. Louis refused to recognize the pope's excommunication of Frederick II and his call for a crusade against him; in fact, he permitted his nobles to join a league which had as its objective the curtailment of papal influence in temporal affairs. Joan of Arc would not be St. Joan today had she heeded the command of her superior, the bishop of Beauvais.

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Perhaps God wants bishops to restrict themselves to the formation of a Christian conscience in the citizen, and let to the citizen the actual choice of parties and candidates. The Church has the right and duty to condemn certain political philosophies and even specific legislation such as that authorizing sterilization. But when individual churchmen prohibit individual citizens from voting for individual parties and candidates, are they not invading Caesar's polling booths?

JOSEPH H. DAHMUS,
Professor of European History,
Pennsylvania State University.

BOOKS

Catholics in Mid-Twentieth Century America

CATHOLICS IN CONVERSATION. By Donald McDonald. Lippincott. $3.95.

By PHILIP DEASY

THE SEVENTEEN Catholics whose views on a large and varied range of subjects comprise this book were chosen because in Mr. McDonald's opinion they represent "singly and together" what he is convinced is "the authentic tradition of the Catholic Church." They are not to be confused with the "traditionalists" who in the course of these conversations are given short shrift. Like Mr. McDonald himself these are Catholics of the "liberal" or liberal persuasion. Catholics of the militant Right, like those who help provide the *Nation Review* with a respectable circulation and keep the Brooklyn *Tablet's* letters-to-the-editor's page vibrating, are left unengaged as far as these conversation pieces are concerned. Mr. McDonald thus leaves considerable room for an enterprising journalist of conservative or even reactionary bent to put together another collection entitled, presumably, *Other Catholics in Conversation.*

Among the select seventeen there are only three women (Sister Mary Emil, Dorothy Day, and Phyllis McGinley) but as their countless admirers already know, their charm, articulate forthrightness, and perspicacity are enough assurance that Catholic women in the authentic tradition are given full voice. The fourteen men include eight priests, one a member of the hierarchy, (Bishop Wright, the Monsignori John Tracy Ellis and George Higgins and Fathers Joseph Fichter, Gustave Weigel, Godfrey Diekmann, Alfred Longley, and Robert Henle); six laymen (John Cogley, Senator Eugene McCarthy, Walter Kerr, J. L. O'Sullivan, J. F. Powers and James O'Gara). The subjects discussed include beside Catholicism in general (Mr. McDonald prefers "Catholicity"), Catholic-Protestant-Jewish relations, social action, the Catholic Worker movement, sociology, parish life, the liturgy, Catholic education (elementary, secondary and especially higher education), the formation of Sisters, poetry, drama criticism, the short story, journalism and politics.

The general reader who prides himself on keeping well informed on all or many of the foregoing matters and who might therefore feel disinclined to go over old ground again, can be assured that he will be repeatedly gratified and enlightened by the insights, the fresh and succinct appraisals and reappraisals the pages of *Catholics in Convertion* provide. Moreover, except for a slight stretch here and there, the ease and spontaneity that should characterize good conversation are unfailingly retained. For this achievement, of course, Mr. McDonald deserves unstinted praise. Immensely knowledgeable, deft and penetrating both in his questions and in his comments, he affords the perfect illustration of Bulwer-Lytton's remark that "The true spirit of conversation consists in building on another man's observation, not overturning it."

While there are, as Mr. McDonald notes in his introduction, some inevitable repetitions in the exchanges, the reader will undoubtedly be more impressed by how the speakers complement one another than by how they repeat. Thus, for example, Bishop Wright's views on Catholic-Potestant relations and Father Weigel's; John Cogley's, Monsignor Ellis's and Father Henle's comments on Catholic higher education; Phyllis McGinley and Father Fichter on the parochial school and Catholic high school; Father Weigel's remarks about the affluent society and Dorothy Day's; Msgr. Ellis and Msgr. Higgins on seminary training, Sister Emil and Father Higgins on Catholic social action; Bishop Wright and Father Longley on Sunday sermons.

And, of course, differences can't be overlooked. Bishop Wright optimistically envisions the insurance men and furniture salesmen who were graduated from his college "back in Boston" going home at night to "good books, good conversation, good intellectual company," but Mr. McDonald in another conversation laments that "everybody in the family seems to be going to meetings. After an evening meal they just scatter, one to a basketball game, another to the C.Y.O. meeting, and a third to a Scout meeting. Sometimes you wind up with two meetings to attend on the same night." This plight leads Father Fichter to coin an aphorism, "The family is broken by divorce, by death—and by parish organizations." Future discussions of Catholic intellect, too, might show awareness of Sister Mary Emil's tart remark, "A man from Mars might read through hundreds of pages of the last three or four years' debate on Catholic intellectualism without ever discovering that there were teaching Sisters or that Catholic education in our country has almost been built on their services."

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Mr. McDonald recognizes that some readers will think of questions he should have asked and didn't. It occurred to this reader to ask himself about answers to questions that could hardly be directly asked. Father Diekmann thinks that Catholics are afraid of the expression "religious experience." "But," he adds, "religious experience is something Catholic. Man has a right to religious experience." Does this book communicate what it feels like to have the religious experience of being a Catholic? What it feels like to have that experience in mid-twentieth century America? To the first part of the question the conversation with Dorothy Day provides an eloquent answer. Yet what may be most significant is in that in the midst of one of her most moving statements she finds it necessary to add, "But you say that to a whole student body [presumably a Catholic college student body] and they don't know what you're talking about."

As for the second part of the question there are two remarks that stand out. One is John Cogley's: "I think the Church is going to have to go to some extreme measures to keep the intellectuals in the Church. I think that is the real problem of American Catholicism." The other comment is by James O'Gara, "Things are changing, our whole style of life has undergone a transformation, traditional values are being challenged and in some cases abandoned. I do not think the Catholic response to all this has yet been adequate."

The sense of "happy abundance" that the conversations of these "truly brilliant American Catholics" communicates is an intellectually exhilarating experience. In *Catholics in Conversation* Mr. McDonald brings us tidings of good cheer. And since exhilaration and good cheer are not incompatible with the season of gifts, both divine and human, just ahead, it may not be amiss to suggest that *Catholics in Conversation* would make a fitting adornment at the foot of the Christmas tree, or even, in its bright red and blue jacket, on a sturdy branch of the tree itself.

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History Reconstituted

RUAN. By Bryher. Pantheon. $3.50.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

BRYHER'S story of a young man of Cornwall in the sixth century bears her famous, marvelous authority of style, but is not as crisp or sparkling as some of her best work. Told in the first person by the boy, Ruan, it has an occasional murkiness of character and an uneven flow which perhaps can be attributed to the narrator himself; Bryher could conceivably claim as an achievement of her art that we tend to blame *him* for the story's faults.

For Bryher is one of the few "historical novelists" who have gone beyond the bounds of their research by the energy and control of imagination, and have reconstituted historical facts into a reflection of life. She is able to tell us, not in an obvious way that the candidates for the Druidic priesthood had to memorize hundreds of genealogies, but that the young man, as one of the candidates, is bored by the task. So adroit is she with the skill of grounding her characters in their milieu that when her narrator does give us a bit of direct lore, it comes artlessly out of the moment she has created. Ruan, late in the story, comes upon some white flowers in Ireland—"blossoms that we called bonewort and the Irish wood violets. My mother had pounded the roots and mixed them with spring water. They comforted an anxious heart." This lad of the sixth century naturally takes his mother's tranquilizer medicines for granted just as we accept modern ones.

Bryher catches us up and puts us successfully into Ruan's day at the very start, and we move with him as he sneaks off from the priests' training school at Lestowder to attend the local fair. The harpist-singer there who tells a tale of Sir Gawain reminds us that we are reading of an era just after that of King Arthur and Camelot. But perhaps the harpist's story, as Bryher recounts it, seems too remote for that age, too legendary-sounding to convince us that Gawain lived only a generation before. In some ways Bryher's method here may be too refined, too lightly glancing, to render the full coloring of that day. On the other hand, many scenes are clear and bright. The fair is described vividly, the incidents and noises are convincing.

Ruan's king dies; already the priests are worried about the Christian monks from Ireland who have gained the favor of the young prince. The Druid rites by now have lost their freshness; but the body of the king nonetheless is sent across the water to the Scilly isles. Ruan watches the cremation: "The fire shot into the sky, the vases toppled, wine hissed over the red-hot brushwood, the heat drove us back but we could smell cloth, leather and the bitter, unfamiliar scents of the embalming ointments. The breeze carried scraps of the mantle flaming into the air. . . . It was so terrible a sight that its magnificence isolated us from grief."

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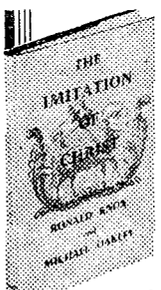

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Instead of going back to his Uncle Honorius, the head priest, and to the stern priest-overseer Kaden (whose name, apparently inadvertently, is given as Kynan at the beginning of the story), Ruan gives his cousin Lydd some money to arrange for passage on a ship going to Wales. Then he finds that Lydd has simply run off with the money, but Ruan is taken on the ship as a crew member. Later he learns that the new king and his followers have been baptized as Christians. He continues on his adventurous way, with his share of danger and grief, and with occasional deep regret for Godrevy, his childhood home. At the end of the story he is setting out with a Finnish captain, Friedowald, who will try to reach some islands that are rumored to exist far away in the West. "My way was with the wanderers. We were the sea's children and, if our voyages seemed to cross and circle without apparent purpose, we should understand the pattern in good time. . . . I could still hear a faint 'Ask' surging through my ears but this time without impatience as if the question itself were its own reply."

Ruan is not Bryher's most polished work. Some of its smudges are possibly part of a deliberate technique; but the nature of her story—characters and scenes encountered briefly and then left behind forever—seems now and then to take it out of focus. Another kind of softness results from the loose run-on sentences, which fail to impart smoothness and a sense of pace. It is possible to say this of *Ruan* and still to add that the story and the scene will not be quickly forgotten.

REVIEWERS

Philip Deasy, a frequent contributor, is a member of the English faculty of St. Peter's College, New Jersey.

Edwin Kennebeck is movie critic for *Today* and a regular reviewer for The Commonweal.

ART

Modern Spanish

THE SPIRIT of nationalism seems to die very hard, if at all; at present, when the idea of one world has finally percolated into almost every field of human activity, we seem to be witnessing a flaring up instead of a dampening down of national ardors. In art, which has traditionally been an oasis with no boundaries, the distinction of the artist has, of course, always been supranational.

Nevertheless, there is a special fascination about recognizing national traits in art, and it can be done harmlessly and purely for the useful purpose of illuminating the particular gifts of a people and the artists they produce. In the case of Spain it may be said there is an added incentive to pin down what is Spanish about a work of art, for in Spain regional differences are still so strong, and so hotly adhered to, that to be able to find common denominators for the artists of different provinces may be said to

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be a step in the right direction, towards a less restricted view. In Spain the peninsular view is the less insular.

A fine opportunity of studying national traits is provided by the show of *New Spanish Painting and Sculpture* which has been at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City all summer and which will now be circulated throughout the U.S. by the Museum with the aid of a new grant from the C.B.S. Foundation. If one wishes, he can view the show as a demonstration that mid-twentieth century art has a strong family resemblance the world over. The preponderance of abstract expressionism and the interest in exploring the use of new materials may engagingly remind us of our own national artistic tendencies. It may be partly for this reason (for their alikeness) and partly because no giant stands out among the artists represented (Picasso and Miró being absent) that it was their rather submerged and subtle un-likeness that captivated my imagination. The Spanishness of these new painters and sculptors struck me as their greatest virtue, although most of them possess very substantial individual talents.

What is Spanish about these abstract artists, when the very fact that they work in abstract terms would seem to guarantee their aloofness from local characteristics? It does not at all consist in the fact that a sculptor (Serrano) calls his evocative work in welded iron *Taurobolium* nor that a painter (Millares) suggests the bullfight in his bunched-up and torn painted canvases; nor is it that Saura forcibly reminds us of his heritage with *Imaginary Portrait of Goya,* nor that Canogar refers to his native landscape with an unrecognizable abstraction called *Toledo.* No. Nor is it even the colors, although they are very Spanish colors generally — from white to black, with flashes of the red or yellow of the Spanish flag, and the neutral colors of sand and rock—the colors to a degree stamp the group of artists as kin, but there is a more basic kinship even than that.

In my opinion it consists of a crisp irony achieved by contrasts of forms. The most hackneyed remark about Spain is that it is a land of contrasts, sun and shade, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, severity and extravagance. Like many hackneyed remarks it is true enough, and when I speak of an irony of forms it is of an irony achieved by the way tense contrasts are handled by most of these artists.

This quality is very explicit in the work of the sculptor Oteiza, for example: his *Slow Forms Before Closing Space* is an open iron composition of flat rectilinear shapes that achieves a marvelous tension of light and dark, or of air and solid. It is a sort of dynamic irony of contrasts. All four examples of this artist's work in the show embody an irony of forms with their dynamic, poised contrasts—*Empty Suspension* is the title of one, remarkable also for the elegant economy of its shape. The sculptors Chillida and Chirino also present this irony with eloquence: the former's *From the Horizon* stabs the air from a sharp-edged axe base, and the

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latter's *The Wind* unwinds from a coil of iron. Both use the tense contrast between their material and space with a grand irony.

The painters of this group who are especially interested in textures express an ironic contrast in their forms more clearly than the others: Tàpies with his bas-relief effects, Rivera with his spider's-web wire and mesh pictures. Feito's lovely meticulous paintings, conventional oil on canvas, breathe the irony of more delicate tensions: they consist of large opalescent areas on which clusters of heavier pigment bloom. Saura, who in my opinion is the very best of these fine new Spanish painters, is the least abstract and the most expressionist. His is an irony that has a "real" bite. In *The Imaginary Portrait of Goya* a violent head leans over a black balcony with a beautiful pale Goya-esque sky behind; it is a magnificently poetic, ironical portrait. His *The Three Graces* is perhaps too reminiscent of Picasso's anatomical witticisms, but his *Crucifixion* is a powerful composition of tangled black line and somber color, a knot of agonized contrasts.

One might go further to some purpose and analyze the qualities in these new Spanish artists that distinguish them as some of Catalonia or Castille—these qualities are indeed discernible, and these artists are grouped usually as members of the School of Barcelona or the School of Madrid—but that might be an excess of zeal, and no matter how illuminating the game of regional characteristics can be, in the end the genius of the artist is all and the rest is simply idiomatic.

BETTY KAUFMAN.

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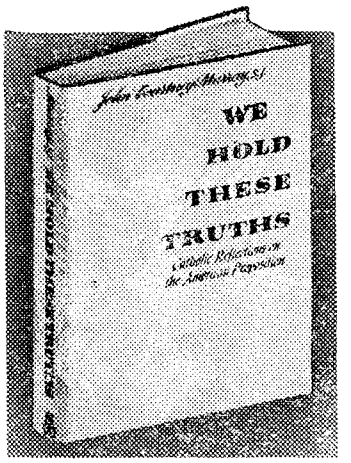

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